

BEFORE THE TAX COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF IDAHO

In the Matter of the Protest of)	
)	DOCKET NO. 19606
[REDACTED],)	
)	DECISION
Petitioner.)	
_____)	

This case arises from a timely protest of a State Tax Commission staff decision adjusting property tax reduction benefits for 2006. This matter was submitted for a decision based on the documents in the file. The State Tax Commission has reviewed the file and makes its decision based on the contents of that file.

All property within the jurisdiction of this state is subject to property tax. A property tax reduction benefit is available to certain qualifying individuals. The benefit is in the form of a payment (either total or partial) of the applicant's property taxes on the dwelling he/she owns and occupies. The payment is funded by state sales tax. The amount of property tax reduction depends on income--the greater the income, the smaller the benefit.

[Redacted] (petitioner) filed an application for property tax reduction benefits with [Redacted] on or about April 14, 2006. The application contained no income information but showed \$3,090.25 of medical expenses and funeral expense of \$5,000. A box was checked indicating she had filed an extension of the time to file her federal individual income tax return.

The staff sent the petitioner a notice advising her of the intent to deny her benefit because the income information was incomplete. The petitioner protested the intended action, and her file was transferred to the Legal/Tax Policy Division for administrative review.

Income for property tax reduction benefit purposes is defined in Idaho Code § 63-701(5):

(5) "Income" means the sum of federal adjusted gross income as defined in the Internal Revenue Code, as defined in section 63-3004, Idaho Code, and to the extent not already included in federal adjusted gross income:

- (a) Alimony;
- (b) Support money;
- (c) Nontaxable strike benefits;
- (d) The nontaxable amount of any individual retirement account, pension or annuity, (including railroad retirement benefits, all payments received under the federal social security act except the social security death benefit as specified in this subsection, state unemployment insurance laws, and veterans disability pensions and compensation, excluding any return of principal paid by the recipient of an annuity and excluding rollovers as provided in section 402 or 403 of the Internal Revenue Code);
- (e) Nontaxable interest received from the federal government or any of its instrumentalities or a state government or any of its instrumentalities;
- (f) Worker's compensation; and
- (g) The gross amount of loss of earnings insurance.

It does not include gifts from nongovernmental sources or inheritances. To the extent not reimbursed, the cost of medical care as defined in section 213(d) of the Internal Revenue Code, incurred or paid by the claimant and, if married, the claimant's spouse, may be deducted from income. To the extent not reimbursed, personal funeral expenses, including prepaid funeral expenses and premiums on funeral insurance, of the claimant and claimant's spouse only, may be deducted from income up to an annual maximum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per claim. "Income" does not include veterans disability pensions received by a person described in subsection (1)(e) who is a claimant or a claimant's spouse if the disability pension is received pursuant to a service-connected disability of a degree of forty percent (40%) or more. "Income" does not include dependency and indemnity compensation or death benefits paid to a person described in subsection (1) of this section by the United States department of veterans affairs and arising from a service-connected death or disability. "Income" does not include lump sum death benefits made by the social security administration pursuant to 42 U.S.C. section 402(i). Documentation of medical expenses may be required by the county assessor, board of equalization and state tax commission in such form as the county assessor, board of equalization or state tax commission shall determine. "Income" shall

be that received in the calendar year immediately preceding the year in which a claim is filed. Where a claimant and/or the claimant's spouse does not file a federal tax return, the claimant's and/or the claimant's spouse's federal adjusted gross income, for purposes of this section, shall be an income equivalent to federal adjusted gross income had the claimant and/or the claimant's spouse filed a federal tax return, as determined by the county assessor. The county assessor, board of equalization or state tax commission may require documentation of income in such form as each shall determine, including, but not limited to: copies of federal or state tax returns and any attachments thereto; and income reporting forms such as the W2 and 1099. (Emphasis added.)

For property tax reduction benefits purposes, the calculation of income starts with federal adjusted gross income and, thereafter, makes certain additions and deductions. During the appeals process, the petitioner submitted a copy of her 2005 federal income tax return showing federal adjusted gross income of \$16,382.

The Tax Commission compared the reported income with the petitioner's income records available to the Tax Commission. In addition to the income shown in the petitioner's 2005 federal return, the Tax Commission identified social security of \$16,144 (after Medicare was deducted) that the petitioner received in 2005 and \$16,928 of social security (after Medicare was deducted) that her late husband received in 2005.

Because Idaho Code § 63-701(4) defines household income as "all income received by the claimant and, if married, all income received by the claimant's spouse, in a calendar year," the petitioner's deceased husband's social security must be included in the petitioner's income for the purpose of this benefit.

The petitioner's adjusted gross income of \$16,382 plus her social security of \$16,144 and her deceased husband's social security of \$16,928 less \$3,090.25 of medical expenses and \$5,000 of

funeral expenses results in a net income of \$41,363.75 for the purpose of the property tax reduction benefit.

The maximum income allowed for qualifying for a minimum benefit is \$28,000. The petitioner must be denied the benefit for 2006.

WHEREFORE, the Intent to Deny Benefits letter dated August 7, 2006, is hereby APPROVED, AFFIRMED, and MADE FINAL.

An explanation of the taxpayer's right to appeal this decision is included with this decision.

DATED this _____ day of _____, 2006.

IDAHO STATE TAX COMMISSION

COMMISSIONER

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this _____ day of _____, 2006, a copy of the within and foregoing DECISION was served by sending the same by United States mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Receipt No.
